3 YEARS EARLIER
AMNESIA?
SHE'S BASICALLY JUST AN EMPTY SHELL.
I SEE.
THIS GIRL?
YES.

WELL, THEN.
I'LL TAKE HER IN.
OH, HOW WONDERFUL!
AS A PART OF YOUR JOB AS AN OFFICIAL WHO PROTECTS THE HAPPINESS OF THE CITIZENS OF OUR CITY-STATE...
NO...
THAT'S NOT THE REASON BEHIND IT.

HELLO THERE.
SHK

LITTLE MISS HATSUNE MIDORIKAWA.

HATSUNE HAS LOST ALL OF HER PRECIOUS MEMORIES. WHO IS THE LADY TAKING CARE OF HER...?

HAPPINESS OP. 4

ART:
MAYU KOSUGI

ORIGINAL CONCEPT:
UTATA P

STORY:
TORY HITSUJI
(PUBLISHED BY PHP INSTITUTE, INC.)

CHARACTER DESIGN:
wogura

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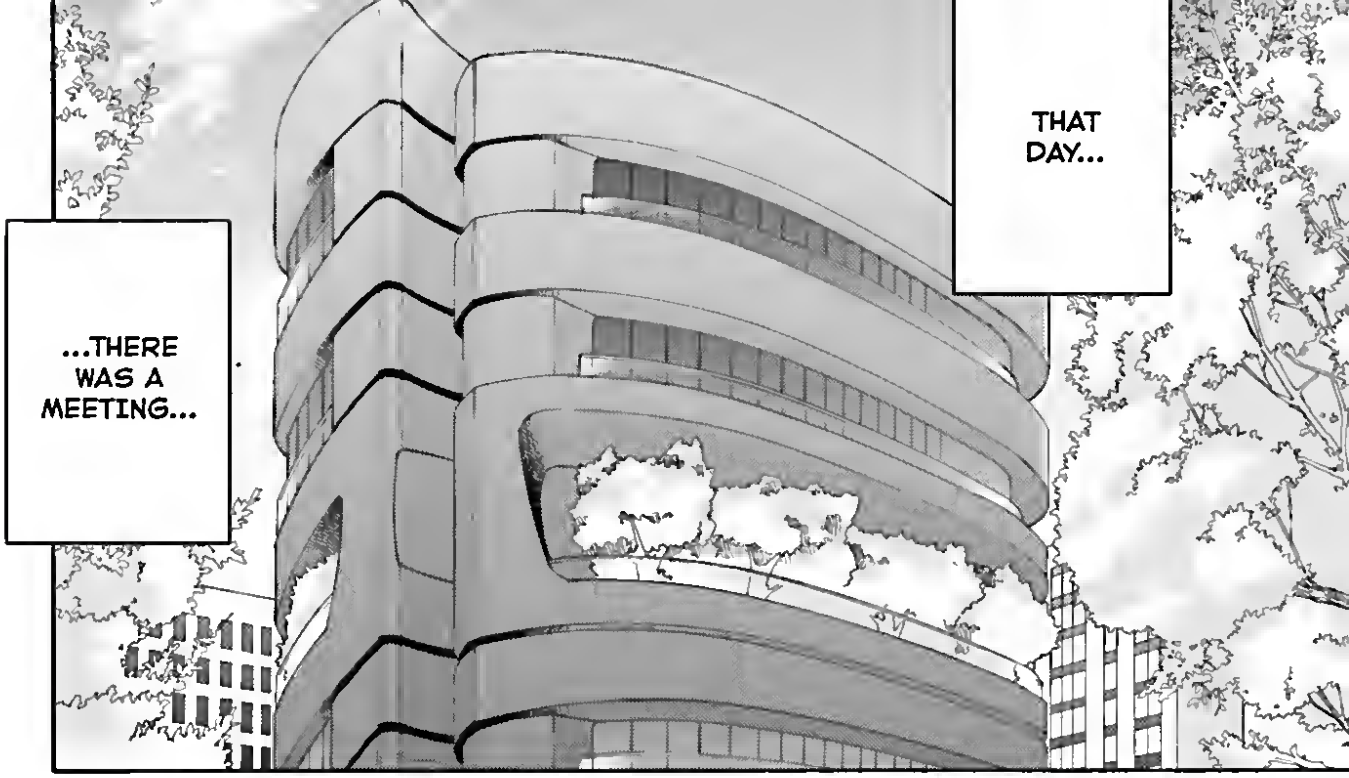
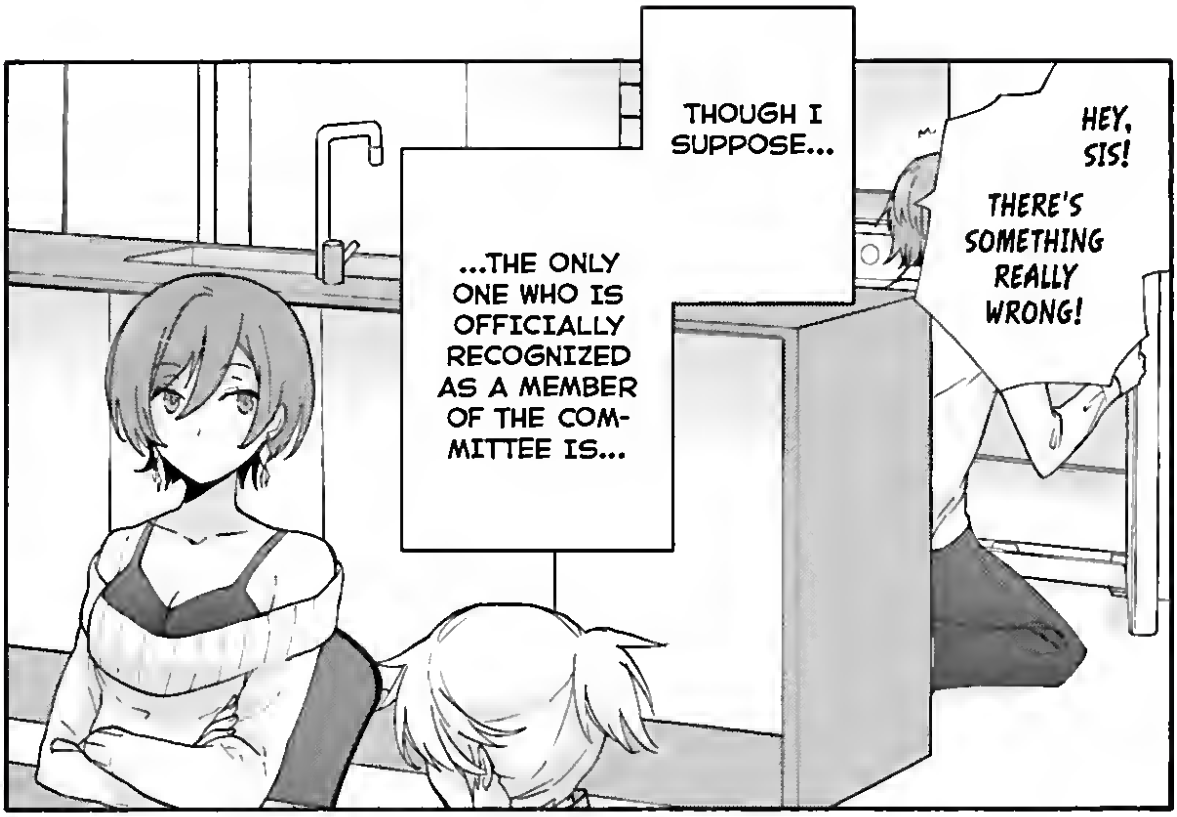

THAT DAY...
...THERE WAS A MEETING...

...OF THE HAPPINESS AND PEACE OF MIND COMMITTEE, AT MY HOUSE.


HEY, SIS!
THERE'S SOMETHING REALLY WRONG!
THOUGH I SUPPOSE...
...THE ONLY ONE WHO IS OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE IS...

THE OTHER MEMBERS ARE STILL...

...JUST IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL.

WE'RE ALL INTERN MEMBERS OF THE HAPPINESS AND PEACE OF MIND COMMITTEE.

COMMONLY CALLED HAPPINESS INTERNS.

KIND OF LIKE APPRENTICES.

MEIKO, TO ME, IS BASICALLY...
...MY LANDLADY, GUARDIAN, AND MOTHER, ALL IN ONE.
OHHH REALLY?
I'LL BUY YOU ANOTHER ONE TO REPLACE IT!
AH, OKAY, THIS'LL WORK!
I GUESS AS AN EMERGENCY MEASURE, I'LL HAVE TO GO WITH MY PLAN B.
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY MORE WATERMELON POPS.
SHE'S VERY YOUNG AND VERY PRETTY.
WHAT'S YOUR "PLAN B"?
JUST IN CASE, I'M ASKING YOU...
ALL RIGHT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE SIMPLE ICE CREAM COULD COST THIS MUCH...
IT'S 290 YEN FOR THIS!
CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS?!
Gasp!

HE'S MEIKO'S YOUNGER BROTHER.
AND HE'S...
...KAI
WHY DIDN'T YOU USE THE SAME AMOUNT OF MONEY TO BUY THREE OTHER ICE CREAMS?
MAAN, THERE'S REALLY NOT THAT MUCH IN HERE, EITHER
OH, I SEE
INSTEAD OF BUYING TWO 100 YEN ICE CREAM BARS, YOU CAN CHOOSE TO BUY THIS ONE. I GUESS THAT'S A VALID CHOICE, MAYBE.
BUT OTHER THAN NOT HAVING 300 YEN,
ANOTHER REASON COULD BE THE DEFERRED IMPACT.
MOST PEOPLE THINK VAGUELY IN TERMS OF BASE TEN...
. SO CHANGING ONE OF THE DIGITS IN THE PRICE GIVES THE ILLUSION IT'S LOWER.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S THE REASON?
RIGHT, LEN?
THAT SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT.

THAT'S OUR LEN.
YOU'RE SO BRIGHT!
THAT'S WHY I KNEW...
...I HAD TO GET YOU ON OUR TEAM.
ふしゃー Fluff Fluff ふしゃー
THAT'S RIGHT.
KAI.
LEN IS WAYYY...
...SMARTER THAN YOU ARE AFTER ALL.
HE MIGHT BE USEFUL, HM?
HE MIGHT BE LESS GREEDY THAN YOU, HM?

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, LEN?
...OH.
THAT'S SO NICE...
I WISH I COULD DO THAT...
...SO NATURALLY WITH LEN.
HIS HAIR LOOKS SO SOFT.
SHIFF
Wah?!

MEOW!
Potato!
I GUESS YOU'LL LET ME PET YOU IN HIS STEAD.
HEE HEE...
SO SOFT.
POF
AH!
POTATO, NO!
Meow
Meow
HEH

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY, KAI?
TWITCH
ピク
THAT EXPRES-SION...
WH--
WHAT WAS THAT?

MAYBE BECAUSE YOU'RE EATING MY ICE CREAM WITH A SMIRK ON YOUR FACE?
WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME, SIS?
I'M SORRY I EVER SAID IT COST TOO MUCH!
ITS QUALITY IS MORE THAN WORTH THE PRICE.
ALL RIGHT, IT'S GOOD!
IT'S REALLY GOOD!
BUT I'M NOT SHARING ANY, OKAY?
Don't want any.
IT'S MY SISTER'S, YOU KNOW?

...WELL THEN!
TMP
LET GO OF THAT SPOON RIGHT NOW, YOU!
ZOOM!
WHAA ?!

OWWWW!!
OWW...
I'M SORRY!
I SAID I'M SORRY!
WAAAAHHH!
AHH!
AHH!
KRASH

I... I'M NO GOOD...
LEN...
I'M SORRY...
I COULDN'T EVEN PROTECT ONE ICE CREAM...

YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS, BUT...
AUGH.
SQUISH

My ice cream....
KAI HERE IS...
...THE LEADER OF THIS GROUP, WHO HAS GATHERED ALL OF US HAPPINESS INTERNS TOGETHER HERE.

I THINK THE REASON THAT LEN CAME INTO OUR GROUP WAS BECAUSE HE LOOKED UP TO KAI.
HE LOOKS PRETTY LAZY, BUT...
...I HEAR HE'S A VERY DILIGENT MEMBER OF THE HAPPINESS COMMITTEE.
In the future, I want to become a member of the Happiness Committee.
GRADUATION ESSAYS
THAT'S WHY I'M REALLY THANKFUL TO KAI AND MEIKO.

THEY'VE MADE IT SO THERE'S NOTHING STRANGE ABOUT ME BEING SEATED NEXT TO HIM IN THE HOUSE RIGHT NOW.
THERE'S REALLY NO...
...OPPOR-TUNITIES TO TALK TO HIM AT SCHOOL.
THE MAP...
はっ
GASP

THAT'S RIGHT.
THIS IS THE ALL-CITY BROADCAST-ING CENTER, ISN'T IT?
THE PLACE MARKED IN RED ON THE MAP...
THERE'S A REBEL...
...WITH THE ONLINE HANDLE "DEMOSTHENES." HAVE YOU HEARD OF HIM?
HE HAS DELIBERATELY BEGUN AN INFORMATION CAMPAIGN...
...TO WARP THE OPINION OF THE CITY STATE'S PUBLIC IN HIS DIRECTION. IT'S A VERY DANGER-OUS THOUGHT CRIME.
YEAH.
HE'S BEEN REALLY FAMOUS LATELY.

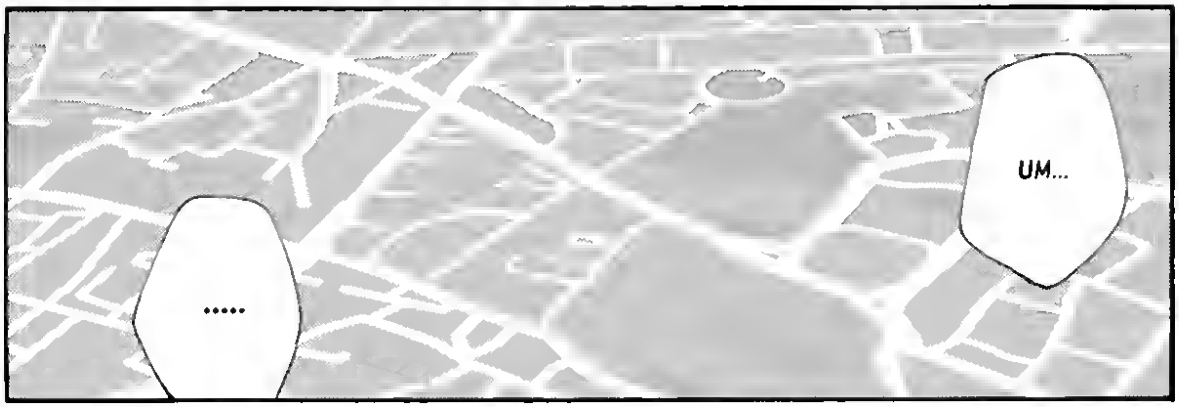
TWO OR THREE TIMES AN HOUR...
HE'S BEEN POSTING ENOUGH THAT...
...I DON'T THINK HE'S ALONE.
...24 HOURS A DAY, INCESSANTLY.
RIGHT, RIGHT.

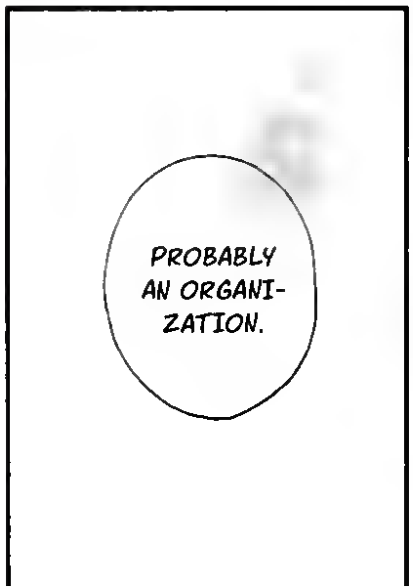
HE SAYS THINGS LIKE THIS...
...ADVOCATING VIOLENT TERRORISM.
HE'S NOT CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROSPERITY OF THE CITY-STATE, AND IS A DANGEROUS POLITICAL DISSIDENT.
HE'S JUST SHOOTING HIS MOUTH OFF ALL THE TIME
HE AND ANOTHER FAMOUS NET DENIZEN, "LOCKE," ARE MORTAL ENEMIES.
"FREEDOM FROM DICTATORSHIP."
"EQUALITY FOR ALL CITIZENS."

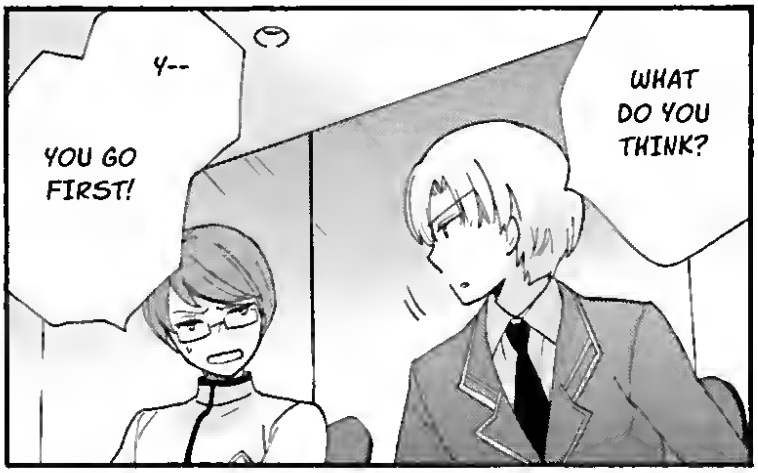
THE "LOCKE" AND "DEMOSTHENES" DEBATE PROGRAM
viewers comments
I'VE SEEN IT...

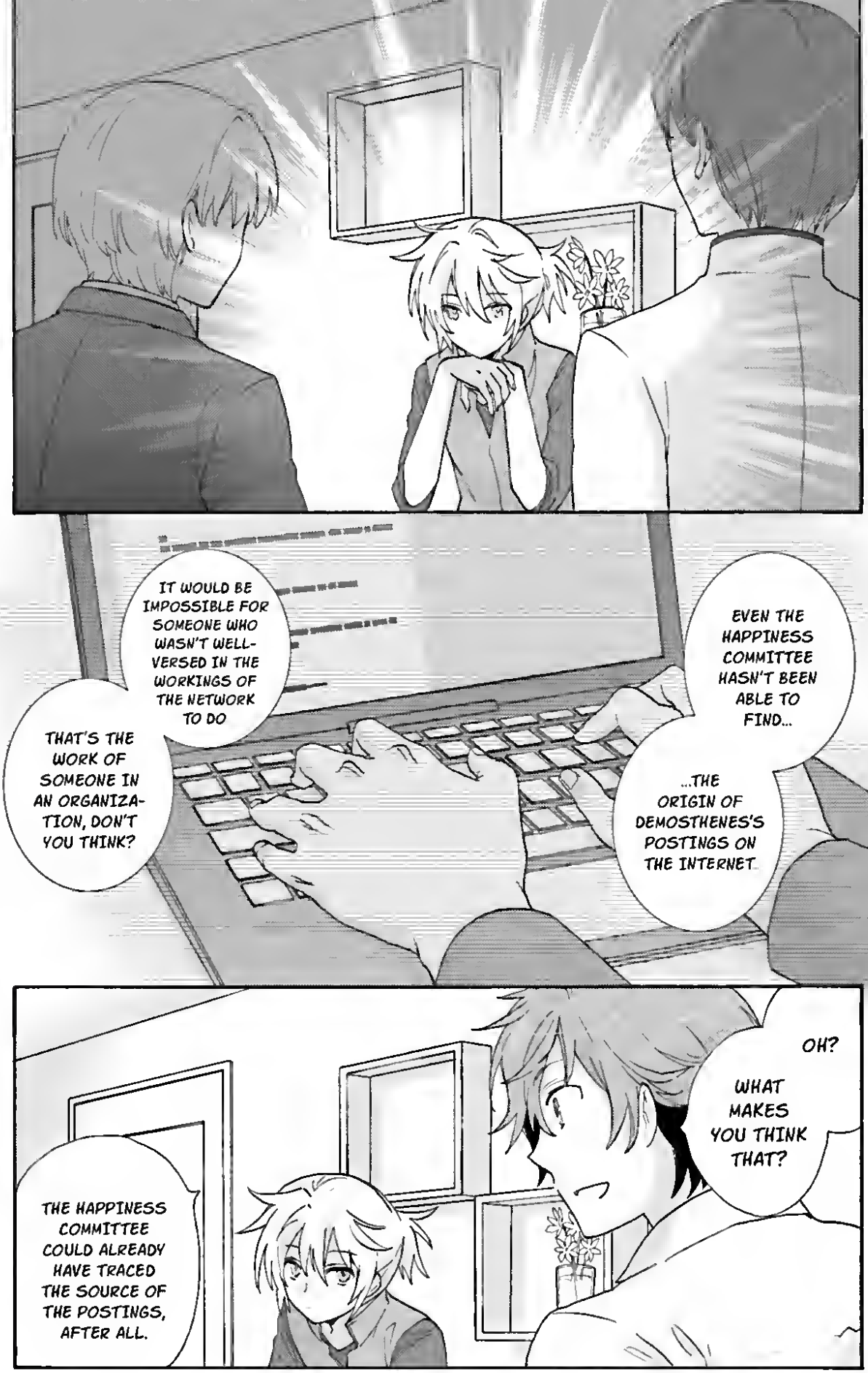
I WATCH IT OFTEN!
DEMOSTHENES IS A TOTAL UNHAPPINESS DISSIDENT!
SO SHOULD WE JUST PUNISH DEMOSTHENES, THEN?
WHAT ABOUT LOCKE, HIS DEBATE OPPONENT?
I HEARD THE PROGRAM ITSELF IS COMPLETELY MADE-UP.
HE THINKS OF HIMSELF AS A POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL FIGURE.
IT'S TEXTBOOK DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR.
EITHER WAY, DEMOSTHENES TALKS TOO MUCH.
THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF DISSIDENTS LIKE THAT RECENTLY
THAT'S RIGHT!

SO, WE CAN IMAGINE THAT THE OBJECT OF OUR INVESTIGATION,
DEMOSTHENES, IS INDEED NOT WORKING ALONE.
THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PEOPLE USING THE NAME, IF NOT AN ORGANIZATION.
WHAT DO YOU ALL THINK?


UM...
.....


PROBABLY AN ORGANIZATION.


Y--
YOU GO FIRST!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?


EVEN THE HAPPINESS COMMITTEE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND...
...THE ORIGIN OF DEMOSTHENES'S POSTINGS ON THE INTERNET
IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOMEONE WHO WASN'T WELL-VERSED IN THE WORKINGS OF THE NETWORK TO DO
THAT'S THE WORK OF SOMEONE IN AN ORGANIZATION, DON'T YOU THINK?
OH?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT?
THE HAPPINESS COMMITTEE COULD ALREADY HAVE TRACED THE SOURCE OF THE POSTINGS, AFTER ALL.

NHK BROADCASTING CENTER
IN OTHER WORDS, OUR DUTY AS HAPPINESS INTERNS...
...IS TO INVESTIGATE WHICH OF THESE BROADCAST STATIONS IS HARBORING DEMOSTHENES.
THE PLACES MARKED WITH RED ARE THE HAPPINESS COMMITTEE'S FAVORED POSSIBILITIES.
LAKESIDE CABLE TELEVISION
LAKESIDE PARK CITY BROADCAST CENTER
THEY HAVEN'T, THOUGH...
LOOK AT THIS MAP.
TMP

DON'T YOU THINK?
...COULD BE A HIDING PLACE FOR UNHAPPINESS DISSIDENTS.
ANY ONE OF THESE BROADCAST CENTERS...

CAN HE REALLY GLEAN ALL THAT INFORMATION JUST FROM THIS MAP?
AMAZ-ING...

HIS EYES...
...CAN SEE THROUGH ANYTHING.
LEN REALLY UNDERSTANDS IT ALL...
AND ALSO...
...HIS SERIOUS FACE IS SO...
...CUTE.
WHAT?
IT'S REALLY...
BUMP
I--
IT'S NOTHING! SORRY!
FWIP

THAT...
...SCARED ME.
TMP
WELL.
THAT'S BASICALLY WHAT WE'RE DOING.
THE CABAL OF UNHAPPINESS DISSIDENTS USING THE NAME "DEMOSTHENES"...
...ARE USING A BROADCAST STATION AS A FRONT TO SPREAD THEIR ANTISOCIAL MESSAGE.
I DON'T THINK THERE ARE MAY CITIZENS WHO...
..WILL BELIEVE DEMOSTHENES AND FALL INTO UNHAPPINESS.
SHP

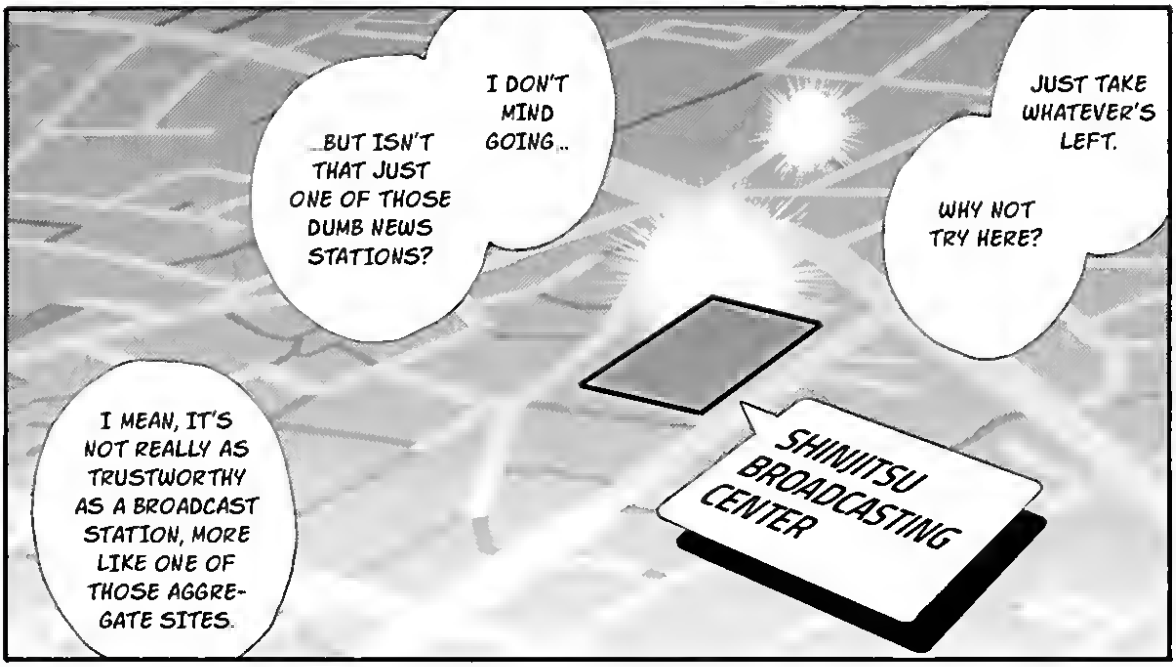
THAT'S THE MOTTO OF THE HAPPINESS AND PEACE OF MIND COMMITEE.
WE HAVE TO NIP THE BUDS OF UNHAPPINESS AS QUICKLY AS IS HUMANLY POSSIBLE.
I'M SURE YOU ALL UNDERSTAND.
DOUBT EVERY-THING.
DON'T GET CONFUSED IF YOU ENCOUNTER UNHAPPINESS.
厚生幸福省
PUBLIC WELFARE: HAPPINESS AND PEACE MINISTRY
IN OTHER WORDS, THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE.

ALL RIGHT!
LET'S ALL DO OUR PART TO INVESTIGATE THE SUSPICIOUS BROADCASTING CENTERS.
AND IF YOU FIND EVIDENCE OF UNHAPPINESS...
USE GOTHIC TO REPORT IT TO ME OR MY SISTER!
ぱぁん!
CLAP!

I'M HEADING OUT!
バタ
clatter
バタ
clatter
SEE YOU LATER!

DON'T JUMP THE GUN, EITHER.
OUR ENEMY IS AN UNHAPPINESS GROUP THAT KEEPS BROADCASTING THE SAME INFORMATION
THEY MAY HAVE DANGEROUS WEAPONS HIDDEN SOMEWHERE.

IS LEN...
...GOING TO STAY HERE?
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO, LEN?
WORK YOUR WAY IN THROUGH EXPERIENCE?
I SUP-POSE...
. BUT MOST OF THE LIKELY PLACES HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN.
MAYBE BECAUSE HE'S NOT A FORMAL MEMBER OF THE HAPPINESS INTERNS?


I MEAN, IT'S NOT REALLY AS TRUSTWORTHY AS A BROADCAST STATION, MORE LIKE ONE OF THOSE AGGREGATE SITES.
BUT ISN'T THAT JUST ONE OF THOSE DUMB NEWS STATIONS?
I DON'T MIND GOING...
JUST TAKE WHATEVER'S LEFT.
WHY NOT TRY HERE?
SHINJITSU BROADCASTING CENTER

IT'LL BE LIKE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE, AT LEAST.
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, THAT'S FINE.
BUT STILL, YOU SHOULD TRY IT.
ALL RIGHT.
THE ACTUAL INTERNS TOOK MOST OF THE REALLY SUSPICIOUS PLACES.
clatter

I'LL BE FINE. I GOT IT.
BUT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ISSUED A GOTHIC YET.
SO BE CAREFUL, OKAY?
ドクン
BADUM
WHAT IS IT...?
MY EMOTIONS ARE STRANGELY DISTURBED.
WHENEVER LEN GETS INVOLVED WITH THE HAPPINESS AND PEACE OF MIND COMMITTEE, I ALWAYS FEEL...
...LIKE SOMETHING UNHAPPY MIGHT HAPPEN.
THOUGH I'M NOT SURE WHY.

ONDINE WHISPERS WARNINGS... WHAT IS THE DANGER THAT AWAITS THE TWO OF THEM AT THEIR INFILTRATION POINT?
Can you really ignore it?
It's very...
...very danger-ous!
ONDINE!